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MEDIA NOTE

U.S. Department of State Launches First Empowering Women and Girls
through Sports Program of 2013

Today, with the arrival of 12 young female basketball players and two coaches from Senegal, the U.S. Department of State launched its first Empowering Women and Girls Through Sports Initiative program of the year. This initiative engages women and girls from every region of the world, ranging from Brazil to Iraq to Liberia to Thailand to Venezuela, to name a few participating countries. Not only does this global effort include a host of countries, it also spans the spectrum of sports, including basketball, field hockey, soccer, softball, and track and field.

The delegation from Senegal will travel to Washington, D.C. and Knoxville, Tennessee through February 1. While in the United States, these young athletes and coaches will share their experiences with their American counterparts as well as learn about sports opportunities for women in the United States. They will participate in basketball clinics and leadership discussions and learn about Title IX, community engagement, and American culture. This initiative is conducted in partnership with the University of Tennessee's Center For Sport, Peace, and Society.

This initiative aims to increase the number of women and girls in sports and works to take the lessons of Title IX – the landmark legislation in the United States that afforded women equality and opportunity through sports – worldwide. It is comprised of three pillars: sports envoys (American athletes who travel overseas); sports visitors (youth athletes and coaches who travel to the U.S.); and the cornerstone of the initiative, the U.S. Department of State and espnW Global Sports Mentoring Program.

The Empowering Women and Girls Through Sports Initiative builds on Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's vision of "smart power," which embraces the full range of diplomatic tools—in this case, sports—to empower women and girls and foster greater understanding. [Click here](#) to learn more.

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